

CHAPTER 118
LOGO SIGNING

761—118.1(306C) Introduction. This chapter pertains to official signs that are located within the right-of-way of interstate and freeway-primary highways and that give specific information of interest to the traveling public. The department shall control the erection and maintenance of these signs in accordance with this chapter and the “Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices,” as adopted in rule 761—130.1(321).

761—118.2(306C) Erection and location of specific service signs.

118.2(1) General.

a. The department shall erect specific service signs at rural interchanges if the requirements of this chapter are met and sufficient space is available. Specific service signs shall not be installed within suburban or urban areas, except where roadside development is rural in character.

b. Specific service signs shall be erected at an interchange only when the motorist can conveniently reenter the interstate or freeway primary highway and continue in the same direction of travel.

c. Specific service signs shall be located in a manner that takes advantage of the natural terrain and that has the least impact on the scenic environment.

118.2(2) Mainline specific service signs.

a. A maximum of four mainline specific service signs shall be installed in advance of an interchange. One mainline specific service sign shall be provided on the interchange approach for each type of motorist service (gas, food, lodging, camping and tourist attractions) if qualified services are available and minimum spacing requirements can be met. However:

(1) When space is limited or where no more than three qualified motorist services desire signing for each of two types of motorist services, business signs for these services may be displayed on the same mainline specific service sign. A combination sign may display no more than three business signs for each service.

(2) A “TOURIST ATTRACTIONS” mainline specific service sign shall be installed only in lieu of or in combination with another service.

b. Mainline specific service signs shall be erected between the previous interchange and 800 feet in advance of the exit direction sign for the interchange from which the services are available. There shall also be at least 800-foot spacing between the signs. In the direction of traffic, the successive signs shall be those for “TOURIST ATTRACTIONS,” “CAMPING,” “LODGING,” “FOOD,” and “GAS,” in that order. If the spacing limitations prohibit the erection of specific service signs for all five types of services, preference shall be given to available “GAS,” “FOOD,” “LODGING,” “CAMPING,” or “TOURIST ATTRACTIONS” services, in that order.

118.2(3) Ramp specific service signs.

a. On a single-exit interchange, the department shall erect a ramp specific service sign if businesses for that type of motorist service are signed on the corresponding mainline specific service sign and one or more of these businesses or their on-premises signing is not visible from the mainline.

b. If conditions permit, the successive panels along the ramp in the direction of traffic shall be those for “TOURIST ATTRACTIONS,” “CAMPING,” “LODGING,” “FOOD,” and “GAS,” in that order. If conditions require sign installation other than successive signs along the ramp, preference shall be given to “GAS,” “FOOD,” “LODGING,” “CAMPING,” or “TOURIST ATTRACTIONS,” in that order.

c. Ramp specific service signs shall not be erected on double-exit interchanges.

118.2(4) Trailblazing signs.

a. Trailblazing signs are small signs similar to ramp signs. They are erected on the road network accessed by way of a logo-signed interchange to direct motorists to a particular business installation, if the business is not located along the intersecting roadway.

b. Trailblazing signs are used only on non-fully controlled access highways. They are installed only for business installations which are signed on the mainline.

c. The department shall install trailblazing signs on routes under its jurisdiction and shall make signs available for local jurisdictions to place on routes within their jurisdictions. The department shall install mainline, ramp and trailblazing signs under its jurisdiction only after the local jurisdiction has placed the required trailblazing signs on local routes. If a local jurisdiction declines to install required trailblazing signs within its jurisdiction, the business does not qualify for logo signing.

d. No more than two trailblazing signs shall be erected for a business. If more than two trailblazing signs are required to guide motorists to the business, the business does not qualify for logo signing.

761—118.3(306C) Placement of business signs on specific service signs.

118.3(1) Mainline specific service signs. A “GAS,” “FOOD,” “LODGING,” “CAMPING,” or “TOURIST ATTRACTIONS” mainline specific service sign shall display a maximum of six individual business signs.

118.3(2) Ramp specific service signs. A “GAS,” “FOOD,” “LODGING,” “CAMPING,” or “TOURIST ATTRACTIONS” ramp specific service sign shall display a maximum of six individual business signs.

761—118.4(306C) Eligibility for placement of business signs on mainline specific service signs.

To qualify for placement of a business sign on a mainline specific service sign, the individual business installation must meet the following requirements:

118.4(1) Written assurance. The individual business installation whose name, symbol, or trademark is to appear on a business sign shall give the department written assurance of its conformity with all applicable laws concerning the provision of public accommodations without regard to race, religion, color, age, sex or national origin, and shall not be in continuing breach of that assurance.

118.4(2) Maximum distance.

a. The maximum distance that the “GAS,” “FOOD,” “LODGING,” “CAMPING,” or “TOURIST ATTRACTIONS” services may be located from the main traveled way to qualify for a business sign shall not exceed three miles in either direction; however, if within the three-mile limit services of the type being considered are not available, the limit of eligibility may be extended in three-mile increments until services of the type being considered, or 15 miles, is reached. The distance shall be measured from the beginning of the exit ramp.

b. In urban areas where the number of qualifying applicants for any service exceeds eight, the department may reduce the maximum travel distance to one mile for that service.

118.4(3) Gas. To qualify for placement of a business sign on a “GAS” specific service sign, the individual business installation must:

- a. Be appropriately licensed as required by law.
- b. Provide vehicle services such as fuel, oil, and water.
- c. Provide free air for tire inflation.
- d. Provide rest room facilities and drinking water.
- e. Operate year-round at least 12 continuous hours per day, 7 days a week.
- f. Provide a public telephone.

118.4(4) Food. To qualify for placement of a business sign on a “FOOD” specific service sign, the individual business installation must:

- a. Be appropriately licensed as required by law.

b. Operate year-round six days a week, and serve three meals a day (breakfast, lunch, and dinner). In situations where a vacant space is available and no fully qualifying businesses have applied, the department may grant an exception to the three-meal-a-day requirement. A business signed under this procedure shall be bumped by a fully qualifying business applicant after the business has had five years to amortize the cost of its signs. If there are more businesses qualifying for this exception than spaces available, a drawing shall be held as provided in subrule 118.5(4).

c. Provide a public telephone.

118.4(5) Lodging. To qualify for placement of a business sign on a “LODGING” specific service sign, the individual business installation must:

a. Be appropriately licensed as required by law.

b. Provide adequate sleeping accommodations consisting of a minimum of ten units each. Each unit must have a bathroom and a sleeping room. EXCEPTION: A bed and breakfast establishment is not required to have more than two guest rooms or provide separate bathroom facilities for each room.

c. Provide a public telephone.

118.4(6) Camping. To qualify for placement of a business sign on a “CAMPING” specific service sign, the individual business installation must:

a. Meet applicable state and local standards for health and sanitation.

b. Agree to the removal or masking of the business sign by the department during off-seasons, if operated on a seasonal basis.

c. Provide a public telephone.

118.4(7) Tourist attractions. To qualify for placement of a business sign on a “TOURIST ATTRACTION” specific service sign, the individual site or attraction must:

a. Be an activity or location that is nationally or regionally known and is one or more of the following:

(1) Natural phenomena.

(2) Historic site.

(3) Cultural site.

(4) Scientific site.

(5) Educational site.

(6) Religious site.

(7) Area of natural beauty.

(8) Area naturally suited for outdoor recreation.

b. Maintain regular hours for that type of establishment.

c. Be appropriately licensed as required by law.

d. Have restroom facilities available for use by the traveling public.

e. Have drinking water available for the traveling public.

f. Have an on-premises or nearby public telephone available for use by the traveling public.

g. Have adequate parking to accommodate its traffic with a minimum of ten spaces.

118.4(8) Compliance with Iowa Code sections 306C.11 and 306C.13. The individual business installation must be in compliance with Iowa Code sections 306C.11 and 306C.13. If an advertising device which serves a business is erected or maintained in violation of either of these sections, that business shall be disqualified from obtaining or maintaining a business sign upon any specific service sign.

761—118.5(306C) Application and fees.

118.5(1) Application.

a. An individual business installation requesting placement of a business sign upon a mainline specific service sign shall submit a completed application form, provided by the department, to the Advertising Management Section, Office of Traffic and Safety, Iowa Department of Transportation, 800 Lincoln Way, Ames, Iowa 50010.

b. If the business installation or its on-premises signing is not visible from the mainline and a ramp specific service sign has been erected, a ramp business sign is required. If the business installation is not located along the intersecting roadway, trailblazing signs are required. A separate application is not needed for a ramp business sign or trailblazing signs. The department will advise the applicant what signs are required once the department approves the application.

c. Once the application is approved and the department has determined what signs are required, the applicant shall remit the required fees and furnish the department with business sign(s) meeting department specifications.

d. Ramp business signs and trailblazing signs shall not be erected until the application for mainline signing is approved. Ramp business signs and trailblazing signs are allowed only for business installations that are signed on the mainline.

118.5(2) Applications for tourist attraction signing. The department shall submit applications from tourist attractions to the tourist signing committee. The tourist signing committee will determine whether the applications meet the qualifications of a tourist attraction. The composition of the committee is set out in 761—subrule 119.5(3).

118.5(3) Fees. The individual business installation shall pay to the department an annual fee of \$50 plus \$15 per month for each business sign supplied for posting. The monthly fee shall be due on or before the first day of each month or payable quarterly with installments due on or before July 1, October 1, January 1, and April 1 of each year. The annual fee shall be due upon approval of the application, and on or before July 1 of each year thereafter. Failure to submit fees by these dates shall be cause for removal and disposition of the affected business sign(s) by the department.

118.5(4) Drawing to allocate space. If the number of qualified applicants is greater than the number of available spaces on a mainline specific service sign, the department shall hold a drawing among the qualified applicants to select the applicants who will fill any vacant spaces.

761—118.6(306C) Business sign specifications. A business sign shall be a blue sign with a white border and white legend, except that colors consistent with customary use should be used with nationally, regionally, or locally known symbols or trademarks. Reflectorization of business signs is optional, at the discretion of the applicant.

118.6(1) Mainline business signs. On mainline business signs, all letters in the principal legend shall be at least 10 inches high, whether capital or lowercase. However, when the symbol or trademark is used alone for the business sign, any legend on it shall be proportional to the size customarily used on the symbol or trademark. The symbol or trademark may also be modified to improve legibility. Supplemental information such as “open 24 hours,” “diesel,” or “mechanic on duty” may be added to the business sign with prior written approval by the department. This supplemental information shall be displayed using 6-inch letters.

a. A “GAS” mainline business sign shall be contained within a 48-inch wide and 36-inch high rectangular panel.

b. A “FOOD,” “LODGING,” “CAMPING” or “TOURIST ATTRACTIONS” mainline business sign shall be contained within a 60-inch wide and 36-inch high rectangular panel.

118.6(2) Ramp business signs. On ramp business signs, all letters in the principal legend shall be at least 4 inches high, whether capital or lowercase. However, when the symbol or trademark is used alone for the business sign, any legend on it shall be proportional to the size customarily used on the symbol or trademark. The symbol or trademark may also be modified to improve legibility.

a. A “GAS” ramp business sign shall be contained within a 24-inch wide and 16-inch high rectangular panel.

b. A “FOOD,” “LODGING,” “CAMPING” or “TOURIST ATTRACTIONS” ramp business sign shall be contained within a 36-inch wide and 16-inch high rectangular panel.

118.6(3) *Trailblazing business signs.* On trailblazing business signs, all letters in the principal legend shall be at least 4 inches high, whether capital or lowercase. However, when the symbol or trademark is used alone for the business sign, any legend on it shall be proportional to size customarily used on the symbol or trademark. The symbol or trademark may also be modified to improve legibility. All trailblazing business signs shall be contained within a 20-inch wide and 12-inch high rectangular panel.

761—118.7(306C) Installation, maintenance, removal and replacement of business signs.

118.7(1) The department shall perform all required installation, maintenance, removal and replacement of business signs upon specific service signs within the right-of-way.

118.7(2) Ordinary initial installation and maintenance services shall be performed by the department during the month of July upon payment of the annual renewal fee.

118.7(3) The department may perform additional requested services in connection with modification of a business sign upon payment of a \$50 service charge. Any required new or renovated business sign shall be provided by the applicant.

118.7(4) The department shall remove and dispose of a business sign if the applicant fails to pay the required fees or if the applicant or business sign violates any provision of these rules.

118.7(5) No business sign shall be displayed which would mislead or misinform the traveling public, or which is unsightly, badly faded, or dilapidated. The department may remove, replace, or mask business signs which violate these provisions.

118.7(6) Messages, trademarks, or brand symbols which interfere with, imitate, or resemble any official warning or regulatory traffic sign, signal or device are prohibited.

118.7(7) The department shall not be responsible for damages to business signs caused by vandalism or natural causes. If a business sign is so damaged and it requires repair or replacement, the applicant shall provide a renovated or new business sign along with payment of a \$50 service charge to the department for replacement of the damaged business sign.

761—118.8(306C) Tourist attraction signing. Tourist attractions may be signed if allowed by the “Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices” or approved by the Federal Highway Administration.

These rules are intended to implement Iowa Code section 306C.11.

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